

Bear Park from Home

Dear Parents of Bear Park,

As we approach the end of week four of Level 4, we would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the strength of our country.

Anzac Day takes place on the 25th of April. It is a day of remembrance, a day that we can promote a sense of unity and pride as we remember those that have endured warfare on behalf of the country.

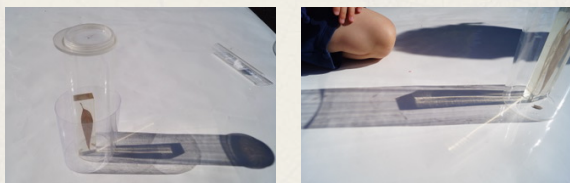
Please take time to read the wonderful article below written by one of our preschool teachers at Henderson Bear Park and have fun designing your own Anzac red poppy with your child/ren.

Wishing you all well and keep safe.

Sue & the Bear Park Team

Extending Your Light Atelier Outdoors

This space is easy to set up, especially if you have already set up a light atelier inside. All you need is a white cloth, sheet or piece of paper and some transparent materials. Just a reminder to think about open-ended materials rather than objects, for example recycled materials that encourage imagination as well as scientific discoveries.



Find a nice sunny spot in the garden or on the deck. You can use a table or the floor to set up your white cloth to capture the effects of the materials.

Invite your child to choose one of the materials and see what happens when the natural sunlight travels through it.

Whilst exploring you can again ask questions such as: "I wonder what you notice?" "What happens if...?"

The idea is to slow down and take a closer look at the finer details of the image that is created.

What happens to the light? What happens to the material?

Perhaps trace around the shadow with a pen. Leave the material in the same position and watch what happens over the day, as the earth is moving.

How does changing the angle alter the light or the shadow?

As mentioned before in a previous newsletter, choose materials with variety, variety of texture, opacity, thickness, flexibility and transparency.

Perhaps use materials that can be stacked and be used to create a light sculpture.

Anzac Day

To pay respect on Anzac Day we would attend parades, church services and the dawn service at the Auckland War Memorial Museum. RSA volunteers would exchange your red poppy buttonhole flowers in return for a donation in support of their organization's welfare fund.

However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic these events have been cancelled. So how can we show our respect and honour those who have served our country?

There will be a virtual dawn service that will be broadcast from 6am on the 25th of April on RNZ National. National President of the RSA BJ Clark said that wherever you are in the world you could take a stand with them by taking a moment to remember our fallen. He suggested standing at your letterbox, front door, in your driveway or lounge but remember to stay within your bubble.

The RSA has a 'Decorate your Letterbox' or window competition, where you could win RSA themed prizes. Create a poppy garden (ideas are below) take a photo of it then upload it to Instagram or Facebook with the tag @RSA National, @NZ Defence Force and use the hashtag #Standatdawn.



"This year, more than ever, we need to draw on the many qualities that the enduring Anzac spirit has taught us - mateship, endurance, good humour, ingenuity, and courage. We encourage veterans, our service people, families and the wider public to engage with the stand at dawn campaign. It is about keeping the Anzac spirit of self-sacrifice alive and relevant for the challenging times in which we now live - more than ever we need to be kind to each other and become stronger from coming together as communities," Clark said.

Some of the ideas for making your own Anzac poppies as shown below but feel free to create your own ideas.



Anzac Biscuit Recipe

Makes 30, depending on size.

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup caster sugar
- 1 cup desiccated coconut
- 2 cups rolled oats
- 125g butter
- 2 tbsp golden syrup
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 3 tbsp boiling water



1. Heat oven to 180°C (160°C fan bake). Line two baking trays with nonstick baking paper. Place flour, caster sugar, coconut and oats in a bowl and stir to combine. Make a well in the centre.
2. Place butter and golden syrup in a saucepan to melt, or microwave in a bowl to melt. Dissolve baking soda in boiling water. Add melted ingredients and dissolved baking soda to dry ingredients and mix to combine.
3. Roll spoonful's into balls and press onto prepared baking trays, allowing space for biscuits to spread while cooking.
4. Bake for 15 minutes or until firm and golden brown. Remove to a wire rack to cool, and enjoy!



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Perception: The Art of Seeing

"We can look and look at a thing until it becomes familiar and clear, and we think that we know it and, then, a change in perspective offers a new context or story, illuminates a detail, illustrates a pattern. We see the thing fresh, with more complexity and nuance." - Ann Pelo

The more we train our eyes and minds to take time to look and look again the more details we will discover. In fact children are masters in looking at the world with fresh eyes. It is natural for children to take time to investigate and be excited about the most detailed discoveries.

Children are open to invitations to look closely and are happy to share what they see, we just need to take time to listen. The more we listen the more we will give children the opportunity to understand their own process of noticing.

Children share their ways of perception not just verbally, but through speaking with their hands and their body. The more visual languages children are exposed to, the more they are able to explore and express their own unique ways.

So when venturing out into the autumn garden to collect leaves, observe how your child/ren are exploring them. See if there might be a favourite leaf, one that seems to speak to her/him or invite them to choose a special leaf. Encourage them to hold it up into the light.



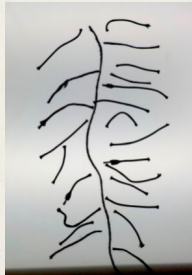
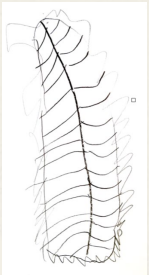
What can you see?

Ask them to run their fingers over the edges.

"What can you feel?" "Is it smooth or bumpy?" "What does this other side of the leaf feel like?"

Perhaps your child/ren can see and feel some holes or the veins in or on the leaves. Remember there is no right or wrong here, as the experience is about your child/ren's perception. Let them share with you what is most exciting to them.

This first encounter might be fairly brief, so it important to come back and revisit this time again, so do keep hold of that leaf and keep re-inviting your child/ren back, offering other tools such as a Magnifying glass or a camera, for which to view it.

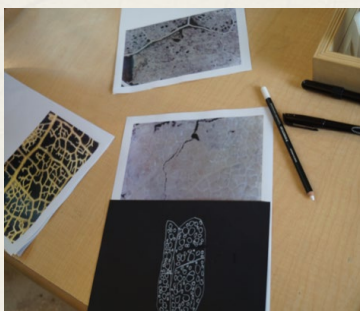


Perhaps they are very excited and want to draw the leaf, so I suggest using a pencil or a black permanent marker. The idea is firstly to explore the shape and form without the distraction of colour. When you do add colour I would suggest watercolours, as they are a great medium, for they don't overpower this detailed initial line work.

Provide the leaf and perhaps some photos of it as an inspiration to for them to draw from. During this process it is important that you bring their attention back to the details that you and your child/ren noticed previously.

For example: *"Remember, when you were holding the leaf into the sun, you saw some lines."*

Let your child/ren create a series of drawings and see how they move through the process, noticing the changes in their details and ways of seeing.



Revisit the leaf and the drawings and repeat the process before adding colour. You may like to extend on the line drawing, by offering some other pens perhaps a white marker on a brown or black piece of paper, or perhaps use some strings instead of a pen.

Again the idea is to allow your child/ren to extend upon their knowledge in context with their previous ideas.

Let Music be Muse

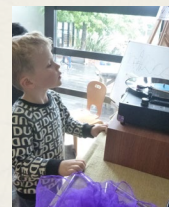
"Through participation in artistic creative experiences, we are inspired to take time to appreciate, watch, wait, look, listen, interpret, and create in ways that uplift and help us to learn and express our feelings about all the wonders and beauty of the world around us." - Julie Wylie



Visual arts and music have a well-established history of inspiring each other. Many a popular song has been written about a work of art, and many a masterpiece has been created based on a melody or song. I'm sure you can all relate to the emotional response of viewing a beautiful painting, or hearing a powerful piece of music.

An interesting way to explore these two creative pursuits in relation to each other is to provide an opportunity to create while listening to music. Propose this idea to your child/ren and engage in a dialogue about what type of paintings or drawings they might create while listening to different types of music. Once you have selected a few different pieces of music, invite your child to consider what materials they will need to represent how the music makes them feel. The Museum of Modern Art's educational guide suggests, *"the best materials for this project are those that can be used more fluidly while the music is being played. Consider using watercolours or acrylic paint. Provide paintbrushes of different sizes and large pieces of paper to paint on. Allow participants to work at their own pace."*

In 2011, Finnish researchers developed a study observing how the brain responds to music and concluded that when listening to music the whole brain is active. During experiences with music the whole brain is engaged, allowing for strong neural pathways to be built. This is why we use music and song in so much of our daily practice, and why young children respond so well to learning through music.



So set up a peaceful space for this activity, play your selected music at a volume that allows you to hear its subtleties without over-stimulating and enjoy the experience of observing the way your child/ren interprets the music. Perhaps you might even like to join in.

Link to the MoMA website with activities and ideas for learning about art at home – [click here](#)

Link to an article about Finnish Research of music's effect on the brain – [click here](#)

Online Resource

Creating secret forts, dens, hideouts, and playhouses aren't just any random kind of play. It's a universal drive that's rooted in kids' healthy development, says educator David Sobel of Antioch University New England – visit this link to find out more – [click here](#)



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